



We hope this packet provides useful general background information on our region as well as details of our specific program areas. The Region 2 administrative office is located in Missoula and is responsible for coordinating all of Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) activities for west central Montana. There are seven administrative regions for FWP across Montana, with the headquarters located in Helena. Region 2 offers some of the most diverse fish, wildlife and recreational opportunities in North America. Deer, elk, moose, bighorn sheep, antelope, black bear, upland bird, waterfowl and mountain goat hunting; wild-trout stream fishing, floating, and white-water rafting; camping and wildlife viewing – along with the scenic splendor of west-central Montana – continue to attract interest from residents as well as visitors.

Meeting the challenges and opportunities associated with managing these resources is the responsibility of Region 2. Landscape management along with balancing growth and development and preserving the wildlife and scenic heritage of Montana has emerged as a significant issue for the department. Montana's valuable assets attract visitors from around the world. As visitation increases, the demands of more people on a finite resource require additional attention from the department to maintain and protect those resources.

Region 2 contains about 10,500 square miles (6,720,000 acres). This area amounts to 7% of Montana and administratively includes Deer Lodge, Granite, Mineral, Missoula, Powell, Ravalli, and part of Lewis and Clark Counties.

In spite of having only 7% of Montana's land and water area, Region 2 has 17.7% of our state's total population of 957,861. Region 2 averages 16.95 persons per square mile – the high is 38.5 in Missoula County and the low is 1.7 in Granite County – compared to the overall state average of 6.4 persons per square mile. From 2000 to 2007, Montana increased 6.2% in population, but two of Region 2's counties had faster growth rates, Missoula at 10.3% and Ravalli at 12%.

Over 75% of Region 2 is available for public recreation. This includes lands managed/owned by the US Forest Service, US Bureau of Land Management, Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, and FWP, as well as Plum Creek Timber Company and other private landowners that permit public access. About 9% (600,000 acres) of the region is designated Wilderness. Wilderness areas include the Scapegoat, Rattlesnake, Welcome Creek, Selway-Bitterroot, Anaconda-Pintlar, Mission and the proposed Great Burn. National Forests in the region include the Bitterroot, Lolo, Beaverhead-Deerlodge and Helena.

There are about 115,900 acres of recreation lands – 1.7% of the region's total area – administered by FWP Region 2's parks and wildlife programs.

The region has 11 state parks, 80 Fishing Access Sites (FASs) and includes the Blackfoot River and Alberton Gorge Recreation Corridors, all providing 922,435 recreation days annually. In addition, the regional rivers are the St. Regis, Clark Fork, Bitterroot, Blackfoot, Little Blackfoot and Clearwater. Fish Creek, Rock Creek and the North Fork of the Blackfoot also provide significant recreational opportunities as well.

The wildlife division in Region 2 administers 10 wildlife management areas (totaling about 94,500 acres). FWP owns about 44,000 acres and leases about 50,500 acres. These WMAs provide winter range for approximately 2,170 elk, 2,700 deer and 300 bighorn sheep, and offer a diversity of waterfowl habitat.

The economic benefits of hunting, fishing and general recreation activities are significant. Resident and non-resident elk hunters alone, contribute over \$98,492,655 total economic impact dollars to the state's economy each year.

At present there are approximately 90 employees (permanent, seasonal and temporary) who reside across the region from Anaconda to Lincoln to Seeley Lake to Missoula to Superior to Darby.

ADMINISTRATION

Region 2's administrative staff includes a regional supervisor, an office manager and four administrative assistants. The regional supervisor is responsible for all regional decisions, statewide coordination, personnel management, oversight and implementation of all FWP programs.

MISSOULA: Mack Long, Regional Supervisor
Virginia "Ginny" Schmautz, Office Manager
Sandy Pearson, Administrative Assistant
Sharon Rose, Administrative Assistant
Dori Schiele, Administrative Assistant
DiAnne Schmautz, Administrative Assistant

FRONT OFFICE STAFF

An important function of the Region 2 office staff is working with the public. A large amount of information is relayed to sportsmen/women in person and over the phone, as well as by mail and email. The front office staff answers questions pertaining to all aspects of the department, including fishing, hunting, boating, floating, trapping, camping, recreation and state park opportunities. The following is a summary of services offered:



- Fishing—Provide information on fishing opportunities, seasons, limits, restrictions and licenses.
- Hunting—Explain hunting opportunities; types of licenses required; how to apply for special licenses such as antelope, sheep, moose, goat, deer B, and special types of elk and deer permits; turkey and swan, lion and sandhill crane deadlines for drawings; mountain lion, black bear and trappers license deadlines.
- Regulations and Laws—Interpret information on hunting districts and explain specific regulations. Interpret stream and land access laws and explain what animals are classified as nongame, predators and protected species.
- Parks—Describe camping and general recreation opportunities; share information about campground costs, location of state parks, fishing access sites and state park rules.
- Residency Requirements—Explain requirements for resident and nonresident licenses.
- Hunter and Bowhunter Education—Provide class information for the region; keep records of student hunter safety numbers and issue duplicate certificates.
- Media—Sell videos and publications, and direct customers to information in brochures and other handouts.

- Licenses & Permits—Sell hunting, fishing, and trapping licenses. Process river recreation permits and special license applications.
- Boats—Complete boat hull ID paperwork and inspect boats. Process boat validation decal paperwork.
- Clerical and Computer Assistance—Provide assistance as needed to regional employees to set up databases, complete mailings and other related tasks.
- EAs/EISs—Maintain a log to track the progress on Region 2's environmental assessments (EAs) and environmental impact statements (EISs) and associated deadlines.
- Databases—Maintain databases to coordinate and track about 275 annual deadlines associated with Region 2 FWP comments on proposed subdivisions, as well as Region 2's review and input on other agency (federal, state, county and municipal) EAs, EISs, projects and permits.
- Review proposed subdivisions for potential impacts to recreation, fish, streams and wildlife.

FISHERIES

MISSOULA: Pat Saffel, Fisheries Manager
Rod Berg, Fisheries Biologist
Ladd Knotek, Fisheries Biologist
Ron Pierce, Fisheries Biologist
David Schmetterling, Fisheries Biologist
Craig Podner, Fisheries Technician
Mike Davidson, Fisheries Technician
Rob Clark, Fisheries Technician
Tracy Elam, Fisheries Technician
John Thabes, Fisheries Technician
John Syslo, Fisheries Technician
Bill Gerhke, Fisheries Technician

HAMILTON: Chris Clancy, Fisheries Biologist
Leslie Nyce, Fisheries Technician

PHILIPSBURG:	Brad Liermann, Fisheries Biologist	Ryan Kreiner, Fisheries Technician
DEER LODGE	Jason Lindstrom, Fisheries Biologist	Ben Whiteford, Fisheries Technician

RESOURCES

- 1,490 miles of trout streams.
- 170 public lakes and small reservoirs (13,500 acres).
- Rainbow, cutthroat, brown & bull trout, and kokanee salmon are the most important game fish.
- About 500,000 angler-days annually provided by Region 2 lakes and streams.
- Home to two species of special concern: the bull trout has Endangered Species Act (ESA) protection, and the westslope cutthroat has been petitioned for ESA inclusion as protected.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Management of native and sport fisheries is achieved by researching and monitoring fish populations, restoring and protecting habitat and modifying fishing regulations. Region 2 fish biologists are conducting radio-telemetry studies to determine habitat requirements and life



histories of native fishes. This information is important in helping to identify locations of critical habitats in need of restoration or protection. The fate of the fish gives us clues to factors that may cause excessive mortality, such as predation. Fish populations are regularly monitored in the Blackfoot River, Clark Fork River, Bitterroot River, and Rock Creek drainages. Based on the findings, biologists make recommendations for fishing regulations to the FWP Commission.

Biologists assist seven Conservation Districts in administering the Natural Streambed and Land Preservation Act ("310"). Region 2 biologists also administer the Stream Protection Act, and in

combination with 310 projects, they review over 500 projects annually. Their role is to represent the Water Quality Bureau in administering 310s and assist in reporting and monitoring water quality-standard violations. They work with other agencies, companies and individuals in land and water management issues.

Biologists in Region 2 have built a successful habitat restoration program working cooperatively with private landowners, as well as federal, state, county, municipal and private organizations. Projects focus on restoring habitat, the connectivity of our stream systems, and reducing fish losses due to various land management practices.

Region 2 fisheries staff has been intensively involved in efforts to restore the fisheries of the Upper Clark Fork River (including Milltown Reservoir) and its tributaries. They have conducted research on how best to achieve restoration, reviewed and commented on and contributed to EPA Superfund plans for remediation of toxic waste, and implemented habitat restoration projects in some tributaries. The goal is to restore the Upper Clark Fork fishery to its full potential with cleanup of toxic waste and active restoration of fish habitat.

In 2008, the Montana Legacy Project was initiated to protect about 300,000 acres of Plum Creek Timber Company properties in western Montana. The Fisheries Division, along with other FWP divisions and private organizations, is pursuing funds and agreements to make this historic land conservation effort a reality.

JOCKO RIVER TROUT HATCHERY

ARLEE: George Kirsch, Fish Hatchery Manager
Jeff Lammerding, Fish Culturist
Ronald Snyder, Fish Culturist



Jocko River Hatchery

Arlee

TOTAL RAINBOW TROUT EGGS TAKEN: 312,480,789 from 1952-2005
4,970,355 in 2005

FISH DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM FOR 2005: 288,470 2-7 inch rainbow trout
20,574 7-12 inch rainbow trout
2,635 12+inch rainbow trout

The Jocko River Trout Hatchery is located near Arlee on the southern end of the Flathead Indian Reservation. The hatchery site consists of 59.71 acres adjacent to the Jocko River.

The primary purpose for the purchase of the Jocko River Trout Hatchery in 1945 was to provide a dependable source of high quality rainbow trout eggs for the entire hatchery system. Prior to this, the eggs were provided by trapping wild stocks and by direct purchase from out-of-state sources. In 1955, in order to expand the gene pool, staff crossed Missouri strain females with Donaldson strain males to create a new brood stock. After that, all original stock was eliminated.

The newly created Arlee rainbow trout had a distinct advantage for the hatchery system because they are fall spawners, thus making it more economical to hold fish over the winter and plant during the following spring. The average annual rainbow egg take is 5 million.

The original mixing of the Donaldson and Missouri stock was found to be fortuitous and continues to give the Arlee rainbow a very successful reproduction rate. The Jocko River Hatchery continues to maintain the excellent genetic variability of the Arlee rainbow trout. The University of Montana works with the hatchery on genetic research.

The hatchery also raises rainbow trout for production. The station annually produces an average of 200,000 4-6 inch trout, 5,000-8,000 catchables (7-9 inch), and 1,000-3,000 retired brood for planting in approximately 35 lakes.

WASHOE PARK TROUT HATCHERY

ANACONDA: Mark Sweeney, Manager
Angela Souther, Fish Culturist
Paul Suek, Fish Culturist

Washoe Park Trout Hatchery, located in Anaconda, maintains the state's only westslope cutthroat trout brood stock. The hatchery collects around 1-2 million eggs annually from three age classes of female cutthroat. Most of the fish egg production is sent to other state hatcheries for final rearing. 150,000 westslope fry and fingerlings are planted annually. Washoe also raises 100,000 rainbow trout fingerlings and about 50,000 rainbow yearlings, as well as 5,000 brown trout fingerlings.



Washoe Park Hatchery

Anaconda

Beginning production in 1907, Washoe is Montana's oldest state-run fish hatchery. The old facility has been replaced with a new state-of-the-art hatchery building and new water distribution lines. Washoe hatchery now has a visitor center that includes an indoor, underwater viewing of a trout stream, an outside display tank with large fish and interpretive displays.

WILDLIFE

MISSOULA: Mike Thompson, Wildlife Manager
Kristi Dubois, Wildlife Biologist, Nongame
Vickie Edwards, Wildlife Biologist
James Jonkel, Wildlife Conflict Specialist
Liz Bradley, Wolf Specialist
Rich DeSimone, Research Biologist
SEELEY LAKE: Jay Kolbe, Wildlife Biologist
PHILIPSBURG: Ray Vinkey, Wildlife Biologist
HAMILTON: Craig Jourdonnais, Wildlife Biologist
WARM SPRINGS: David Dziak, Wildlife Management Areas Manager
SEASONAL EMPLOYEES: 5

PROGRAM

The wildlife division of Region 2 is responsible for the management of wildlife on about 10,500 square miles of west-central Montana west of the Continental Divide. The majority of this land is in public ownership, including 59% in federal lands (57% in Forest Service and 2% Bureau of Land Management). Ownership of the remaining lands includes: 26% in privately owned small tracts, 10% with Plum Creek Timber Company, 3% Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC), and 2% owned or leased by FWP.

There are ten full-time employees in the division. Five are based in Missoula: the wildlife manager; the biologist who specializes in nongame wildlife; the biologist in charge of surveys and inventories in the lower Clark Fork and Missoula area; the wildlife conflict specialist, who is responsible for a variety of duties, including black bear, grizzly bear and lion conflicts; and the regional wolf specialist. Biologists are also located in Philipsburg, Hamilton, and Seeley Lake to implement habitat conservation strategies, as well as surveys and inventories in the upper Clark Fork and Rock Creek, the Bitterroot, and the Blackfoot, respectively. One staff member is stationed at Warm Springs to manage the Warm Springs Wildlife Management Area (WMA), a waterfowl management area, and the region's other WMAs. There are also five seasonal employees, two who assist with the operation of wildlife check stations during the

general hunting season, one who performs maintenance activities on the WMAs, one who also performs maintenance activities on the WMAs and assists with various wildlife conflicts including bears and lions, and one who monitors wolf packs.

There are huntable populations of nine big game species within Region 2: elk, mule deer, white-tailed deer, black bear, bighorn sheep, mountain goat, moose, mountain lion and antelope. Grizzly bears are also

present, and as populations continue to increase, the distribution of grizzly bears



Aerial elk survey on Blackfoot-Clearwater WMA

is expanding through the Blackfoot Valley and south of Montana Highway 200. Since the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) reintroduced wolves in 1995 and 1996 from Canada to Yellowstone National Park and central Idaho, the wolf population in Region 2 has grown to include 26 documented packs (as of July 2008). Wolves are still listed under the Endangered Species Act, but delisting criteria have been met in Montana. Montana has a federally approved wolf management plan, and is taking the management lead in wolf monitoring and outreach efforts. FWP has four wolf management specialists, and the specialist that covers Region 2 is based out of the Missoula office.

Elk populations remain at modern-day high levels in most areas of Region 2. Population objectives as stated in FWP's Elk Plan are to generally stabilize populations and reduce game damage problems on private land.

White-tailed deer populations in western Montana increased through the 1980s into the mid 1990s and were at 20th-Century highs until the severe winter of 1996-97, which resulted in a moderate population decline with considerable mortality of fawns and adults. As a result, antlerless harvests were eliminated in the impacted areas, but have been reinstated as several mild winters have resulted in populations rebounding rapidly.

Mule deer populations continue to be monitored periodically at 10 survey locations in portions of nine hunting districts in Region 2. Surveys through the spring of 2008 indicated populations were generally at or above the long-term average. Antlerless mule deer hunting in Region 2 is currently limited to eight hunting districts, where B licenses are available through the June 1st special drawing.

To address a growing public interest in managing for an increasing number and an older age class of mule deer bucks, mule deer buck permit-only hunting was implemented in five hunting Districts (HDs) beginning with the 1998 hunting season. Buck:doe ratios and buck age structure are carefully monitored in these districts to measure progress toward objectives. Permits for HD 270, the East Fork of the Bitterroot, are now especially coveted for the opportunity to hunt for big mule deer bucks.

Upland game bird hunting is somewhat limited, although there are ample opportunities to hunt the three species of mountain grouse. Ringnecked pheasant and Hungarian partridge populations and distribution are limited due to a lack of suitable habitat. The Bitterroot Valley, east Garnet Range and lower Clark Fork areas provide some opportunity to hunt turkeys during the spring and fall gobbler seasons.

Ten wildlife management areas are located in Region 2. These have been acquired or leased to protect and enhance critical habitat for elk, deer, bighorn sheep and waterfowl. They include:

1. Calf Creek WMA (east of Corvallis): 2,174 deeded acres, 160 leased acres (from DNRC); acquired primarily as elk winter range.
2. Threemile WMA (east of Florence): 6,089 deeded acres; managed primarily as elk winter range.



3. Blackfoot-Clearwater WMA (between Seeley Lake and Ovando): largest WMA in Region 2; 23,000 deeded acres, 43,000 acres leased or under conservation easement (from Plum Creek Timber Co., The Nature Conservancy and DNRC); managed as elk and deer winter range.
4. Nevada Lake WMA (near Helmville): 739 deeded acres, 440 leased acres (from The Nature Conservancy); managed as elk winter range.
5. Warm Springs WMA (near Warm Springs): 110 deeded acres, 5,475 leased acres (from ARCO and the State Hospital), and 226 acres leased from the State Highway Department; managed as a waterfowl production area. Region 2 has worked closely with Ducks Unlimited (DU) to develop waterfowl ponds on and near the Warm Springs WMA. Seven ponds covering about 120 acres were developed on State Hospital land leased by FWP, and an additional 18 ponds (about one acre each) were created on adjacent private land in conjunction with a restoration grazing program with the landowner. The adjacent Dutchman Wetland is expected to be added to this WMA in the near future.
6. Lost Creek WMA (north of Anaconda): 1,403 deeded acres; managed as deer, elk and bighorn sheep winter range.
7. Garrity Mountain WMA (south of Anaconda): 8,969 deeded acres, 480 acres leased from DNRC; managed as elk, deer, and bighorn sheep winter range.
8. Aunt Molly WMA (between Ovando and Helmville): 1,184 deeded acres; managed for deer and waterfowl.
9. Mount Jumbo WMA (near Missoula): 120 deeded acres, 920 acres owned by the City of Missoula; managed for elk and deer winter range.
10. Blue-eyed Nellie WMA (near Anaconda): 460 acres; managed for year-round use by bighorn sheep.

Since 1994, eleven conservation easements with private landowners or DNRC have been completed in Region 2 to permanently protect critical wildlife habitat from subdivision and other activities that could adversely impact wildlife. These include the Mannix Brothers easement near Helmville (3,000 acres), the Brown Valley Ranch easement east of Florence (1,800 acres), the Bolin Ranch and Lewis Ranch easements east of Stevensville (5,335 acres), the Dalton Mountain easement southeast of Helmville (5,000 acres), the Gillies Ranch easement west of Philipsburg along Rock Creek (1,554 acres), the Reinoehl and Clearwater Junction easements near the Clearwater Junction (888 acres), the Manley (Phase 1) easement between Drummond and Helmville (4,636 acres), the Upsata Lake easement northwest of Ovando (374 acres), and the Blackfoot-Clearwater easement (6,849 acres).

As elk and deer populations increase, complaints from landowners regarding damage to crops, haystacks, fences, etc., have also increased. Although control of these populations during the general hunting season is desirable, it is not always possible due to elk and deer movements and distribution, and limited hunting access on certain large ranches. As a result, measures are taken to assist the landowner and help alleviate the problem. These measures include game damage

hunts, fencing haystacks, providing permanent stack years, hiring herders to harass the animals from the problem area, using scare-away guns and cracker shells, and issuing kill permits.

Increasingly, the wildlife program in Region 2 is consumed with efforts to prevent, correct, and mitigate conflicts between wildlife and people caused by the increasing human population in western Montana. Urban wildlife duties include collaborating with community working groups; educating rural, suburban, and urban residents; capturing and removing grizzly bears and mountain lions in response to concerns for human safety; containing human attractants to prevent the habituation and ultimate deaths of black bears, deer, and other wildlife around the expanding urban interface; and recommending ways to mitigate the impacts of increasing residential subdivisions. The extent to which we succeed in this effort will in large part determine the extent to which Montanans and its visitors can hope to enjoy large populations of wild, free-roaming wildlife, and generous opportunities to hunt and view them in wild settings in the future

BLOCK MANAGEMENT

MISSOULA: Bart Morris, Block Management Program Coordinator
Sharon Rose, Administrative Assistant (seasonal)
Kyle Miller, Conservation Specialist (seasonal)

SEASONAL FIELD EMPLOYEES: 5

PRIVATE LAND HUNTING ACCESS

A unique hunting access program, Block Management is a cooperative agreement between private landowners and FWP to provide free public hunting access to private land and sometimes to isolated tracts of public land. Landowners enrolled in the program are compensated for access they provide and may receive up to \$12,000. The program is primarily funded by the sale of nonresident, outfitter-sponsored, big game and upland game bird hunting licenses. Resident hunters also contribute about 10% to program funding through payment of a \$2.00 hunting access



A hunter uses a sign-in box at a R2 BMA.

enhancement fee when purchasing their first hunting license each year. Additional funding is provided through purchase of SuperTag lottery chances, a system in which hunters can purchase unlimited \$5.00 chances to win a license to hunt either moose, sheep, goat, elk or deer in any hunting district in Montana. Revenue from the SuperTag sales is earmarked to enhance hunting access and boost FWP enforcement efforts.

Block Management responsibilities are to balance the needs of the hunting public, the resource, and landowners in a manner that provides diverse hunting opportunities across Region 2. To accomplish this, an interdivisional committee meets annually in the spring to prioritize properties for enrollment based on public hunting demands. Contracts, which set forth the terms for access, are

then signed with landowners. For the 2008 hunting season, 157 landowners in Region 2 have enrolled in the Block Management Program and will receive an average payment of \$2,150.

A list of these opportunities, called Block Management Areas (BMAs), is published annually by August 15, allowing hunters to begin planning their fall hunts. BMAs may be individual ranches, where the hunter contacts the landowner for written permission to enter the property, or may be several ranches “blocked” together to form a single management unit. For 2008 there are 62 BMAs encompassing about 300,000 acres in Region 2. In addition to the 62 BMAs in Region 2, Plum Creek Timber Company enrolled approximately 500,000 acres of their land in the R2 Block Management program in 2008. These BMAs represent diverse hunting opportunities, ranging in size from 87 to 40,000 acres, which should allow west-central Montana hunters to find a private land opportunity that fits with their hunting style and preferences.

Block Management staff process thousands of requests for BMA access information each year from August through December. Hunter use records for the 2007 fall hunting seasons show that about 33,734 hunter days were spent on Block Management Areas in Region 2.

COMMUNICATIONS & EDUCATION

MISSOULA: Vivaca Crowser, Information and Education Program Manager



Vivaca Crowser helping visitors at a FWP booth identify furs from Montana wildlife.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The information and education program manager is responsible for internal and external communication and education efforts. The objective of the internal effort is to keep FWP personnel informed of policy and programs so they can effectively inform the public on current issues and programs. The external communication objective is to inform members of the public so they can have meaningful input into decisions regarding the resources FWP manages. The program manager often translates technical reports into information understandable to the general public.

The information and education program manager also administers the Hunter, Bowhunter and Aquatic Education programs for R2. As part of this work, the program manager supervises over 300 volunteer instructors and organizes classes that reach thousands of students each year to encourage safe, knowledgeable, involved and responsible outdoor recreation.

ANNUAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Television: 22-30 news stories/interviews airing on local stations.
- Radio: 40-60 interviews airing on 8 stations in Region 2.
- Print Media: 85-120 news releases; interviews for newspapers in, and periodically outside the region.
- Meetings: Attends and presents programs at various sportsman's, conservation, agricultural and civic groups in the region.
- Programs: 20-35 personal-appearance programs presented to schools, youth groups and 9 adult service organizations.
- Hunter Education: Recruit, train and supervise nearly 300 volunteer instructors for the Hunter and Bowhunter Education programs. Over 1,200 students are certified annually in Region 2.
- Youth Angler Education: Recruit, train and supervise volunteer instructors helping kids and families become involved in fishing. The educational program reached 3,561 kids and adults in 2007.

STATE PARKS

MISSOULA: Lee Bastian, Regional Parks Manager
Mike Hathaway, Parks Operations Supervisor
Doug Frazier, Maintenance Supervisor
Morgan Dollinger, Maintenance
Chet Crowser, River Recreation Manager
Rory Zarling, Fishing Access Site Manager
Vernon Carroll, Interpretive Specialist (seasonal)

SEELEY LAKE: Chris Lorentz, Parks Operations Supervisor

SEASONAL EMPLOYEES: 19 **INTERNS:** 1

STATE PARK SITES:

Lost Creek
Anaconda Stack
Beavertail Hill
Salmon Lake
Placid Lake
Frenchtown Pond
Granite
Fort Owen
Painted Rocks
Council Grove
Travelers Rest

RIVER RECREATION

CORRIDORS:

Blackfoot
Alberton Gorge (lower
Clark Fork)

RIFLE RANGES:

Whittecar
Deep Creek

SNOWMOBILE

CLUBS: 8

VISITATION:

State Parks: 173,908
FASs: 748,527

FISHING ACCESS

SITES (FASs): 80

The purpose of Montana's State Park System is to protect key natural resources, preserve important aspects of Montana's history and culture, offer outdoor recreation opportunities, educate and inform visitors about the state's resources, and provide economic benefits for communities near park sites, primarily through tourism. The mission of Montana state parks has not changed significantly since the system was established in 1939, but the importance of the work has increased over time. The state parks system is heavily used by Montana residents (82% of all users) and provides a key set of attractions for the 10.6 million nonresidents who visited our state in 2007, up 2.9% from 2006. In 2007, travel expenditures by non-resident visitors totaled over \$3.08 billion, which generated over \$4.3 billion in total economic impacts.

Montana's 50 state parks play a different role than their counterparts in many other states, in part because of the substantial amount of federal land ownership in Montana. While Montana State Parks are sometimes overshadowed by the presence of Yellowstone and Glacier National Parks – as well as large amounts of US Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management property – the system preserves a vital part of Montana's natural, cultural, and recreational heritage. Montana State Parks are diverse, ranging from nationally significant sites such as Bannack ghost town near Dillon and Travelers' Rest in Lolo, to parks that are primarily of regional or local significance, such as Frenchtown Pond State Park near Missoula and Placid Lake State Park near Seeley Lake.

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS OVER LAST TWO YEARS

STATE PARKS

- Travelers' Rest State Park — Travelers' Rest State Park is managed by the non-profit organization, Travelers' Rest Preservation & Heritage Association (TRPHA). In 2005 and 2006, Travelers' Rest State Park played a key role in the Lewis & Clark Bicentennial Celebration for Western Montana. In 2007, there were 18,440 people that visited this site. Prior to the celebrations, development projects, including a new entrance and road system and footbridge over Lolo Creek, were completed to allow for better public access and visitor services. In 2007, a Cultural Resource Management Plan was completed that will help shape the management needs for the cultural resources of the park.
- Frenchtown Pond State Park — Phase III of a capital development project, including the installation of a well and irrigation system, the addition of topsoil and turf grass in areas of high use and landscaping with trees and shrubs was completed in 2007.
- Lost Creek State Park — A new volunteer campground host camp pad was installed at the park in the fall of 2007 that included underground utilities, a gravel camp pad and storage shed. These site developments helped in recruiting a volunteer host that provided site security for the park while serving as an "ambassador" for the park.
- Placid Lake State Park — A capital development project, including the paving of the interior road system and campsites, a new campground host pad, a new concrete boat ramp, and a second dock with boat slips was completed in 2007 & 2008. These were all designed to enhance the visitor experience at this state park. Comments from the public have been very positive.



Part of development and landscaping project at Frenchtown Pond State Park.

RECREATION

- The Alberton Gorge — FWP manages this whitewater section of the Clark Fork River, located about 40 miles west of Missoula. A unique land exchange completed in 2004 brought 306 acres along the Gorge into public ownership and involved parcels of state, federal and private property scattered across Montana. The exchange placed a seven-mile corridor along the Clark Fork River into the ownership and management of FWP. Five Valleys Land Trust, the US Forest Service and FWP and other state agencies and conservation groups were involved in the exchange. The Gorge experiences approximately 25,000 user days during the summer months including the 25 active commercial outfitters registered with the Department.
- The Blackfoot River — The River Recreation Advisory For Tomorrow (RRAFT) Committee was established in 2007 to help FWP develop recommendations for managing recreation on rivers in west-central Montana including the Blackfoot, Bitterroot, and Clark Fork Rivers and Rock

Creek. Additionally, a Blackfoot River Recreation Management plan will be developed based on the recommendations of the RRAFT and input from the public.

FISHING ACCESS SITES (Recent Projects)



Cyr Fishing Access Site, a popular launching spot for a trip down the Alberton Gorge.

- Stuart Mill Bay – FWP acquired this Georgetown Lake access site through the Conservation Fund’s application to the Natural Resource Damage Program. The completed improvement project at this site included a graveled interior road system & campsites, tables and grills, signage, a boat ramp and concrete latrines.
- Bearmouth – FWP acquired an additional 20 acres on the Clark Fork River through a donation from Five Valleys Land Trust & Gene Tripp. This parcel is adjacent to the 9 acre parcel the Department received in 2006.
- Little Blackfoot – FWP completed the site improvement project this summer. It included a new interior graveled road and parking area, a gravel pad for a portable latrine, and signage.
- Kona Bridge – A fishing access site located on the Clark Fork downstream from Missoula, was a cooperative development project with Missoula County. Development included a paved road and parking, concrete latrine, boat ramp, signage, fencing and gate. Both Missoula County and FWP funded this project, and FWP is managing it.
- Old Harper Bridge – Located approximately 4 miles downstream from the Kona FAS was a recent 12 acre acquisition. This site will be designed and developed for a future fishing access site.
- Scotty Brown Bridge – Located on the upper reaches of the Blackfoot River, a land exchange with a neighbor was completed to put this site into public ownership. A small improvement project consisting of a new graveled road and parking area, fencing, and signage is planned for this fall.
- Poker Joe – Located approximately 19 miles south of Missoula on the Bitterroot River, was the site of a dispute over public access between FWP and the neighbors. After negotiating a resolution between the two parties, FWP was able to secure permanent public access. In the resolution, FWP agreed to develop a graveled parking area and latrine on the publically owned land and to install speed bumps and signage on the access road leading to the site. This project was completed by July of 2008. After negotiating a resolution between the two parties, FWP was able to secure permanent public access. In the resolution, FWP agreed to develop a graveled

parking area and latrine on the publically owned land and to install speed bumps and signage on the access road leading to the site. This project was completed by July of 2008.

WEED CONTROL

- In June 2008, FWP completed the Statewide Integrated Noxious Weed Management Plan. This plan updates and integrates all former FWP weed management plans and brings consistency to statewide Department weed management.
- FWP continues to work with county weed supervisors on the control of noxious weeds. County weed supervisors helped in FWP efforts to update annual work plans and maintain written agreements for implementing an integrated noxious weed management plan in compliance with House Bill 395.
- FWP participates with local public land and corporate land managers, including the USFS, BLM, DNRC, Missoula County, University of Montana, Plum Creek Timber Company, and the Missoula County Conservation District, to discuss weed management issues.
- FWP spent \$43,895 in FY2006 and \$42,737 in FY2007 in fighting weeds on our state parks and FAS sites using mechanical, cultural and chemical methods.

INTERN PROGRAM

The FWP Parks Division utilized one university intern for each year of 2007 and 2008 to complete important work within the Parks program. These projects mainly consisted of interpretive programming and campfire talks. These internships provide great learning experiences for the students, while giving FWP a boost in accomplishing these projects.

ENFORCEMENT

The R2 enforcement staff consists of ten permanent wardens, one recreation warden, one conservation specialist, two warden sergeants and a captain. Personnel are strategically located throughout the seven counties of west central Montana.

MISSOULA: Jeff Darrah, Warden Captain
Dan Curtin, Warden Sergeant
Matt Stonesifer, Warden
Derek Schott, Warden
Aaron Berg, Recreation Warden
Kyle Miller, Conservation Specialist
J.D. Douglas, Criminal Investigator

DARBY: Lou Royce, Warden
DEER LODGE: Dan Burns, Warden
HAMILTON: Joe Jaquith, Warden Sergeant
LINCOLN: Ezra Schwalm, Warden
PHILIPSBURG: Terry Althaus, Warden
SEELEY LAKE: Bill Koppen, Warden
STEVENSVILLE: Doug Johnson, Warden
SUPERIOR: Mike Fegely, Warden

The enforcement division plays a major role in

accomplishing FWP's overall mandate to protect and manage Montana's fish and wildlife resources by enforcing the laws of the state and the rules of FWP. Although enforcing hunting and fishing laws and regulations is the most commonly understood function of the division, the duties of enforcement personnel are much broader. Wardens are very active in promoting good landowner/sportsman relations, increasing public access to private property, and educating the public about fish and wildlife issues and laws by attending local sportsman's club meetings, talking to civic organizations and helping with Hunter Education classes. Wardens are also proactive in educating young children about lions and bears by giving school presentations. Other education efforts led by wardens include a comprehensive bull trout education program that has been presented in the grade schools of the region and is now available to teachers.

In addition to hunting and fishing, west-central Montana offers unlimited recreational opportunities for boating, floating, snowmobiling, off-road vehicle use and enjoying the state parks system. Increasingly large numbers of people are pursuing these activities, and wardens spend a considerable amount of time on boat registration, water safety, snowmobile and ATVenforcement, and contacting visitors in Region 2 parks, fishing access sites and other recreation lands.

With the continuing encroachment of civilization into previously wild, undeveloped areas and the abundant populations of elk, deer, bear, and lions in Region 2, conflicts are inevitable.



Game Warden Mike Fegely with a deer he confiscated from a poacher in the Alberton area. The poacher pled guilty to taking this and four other deer and is facing several thousands of dollars in fines.

Landowners call upon wardens to alleviate various game damage problems, and this work includes mitigating crop and haystack damage caused by deer and elk and trapping and relocating bears and mountain lions.

Other duties include administration of special-purpose licenses (including those for private and commercial fish ponds, taxidermists, fur dealers, landowner trappers, falconers, game farms, fur farms, bird farms, shooting preserves, field trials, zoos) and about 70 license providers in Region 2. Wardens also gather biological information when tagging furbearers, collecting carcasses, plugging bighorn sheep heads, measuring and trophying goat and sheep horns, and collecting moose jaws and mountain lion and black bear teeth.



Warden Captain Jeff Darrah and Warden Sergeant Joe Jaquith with animals that were confiscated during a large wildlife investigation in the Seeley Lake area.

The job of a warden has changed considerably over the years with the addition of new duties and responsibilities. However, the underlying enforcement goal of ensuring an acceptable level of compliance with fish, wildlife and parks laws and regulations remains the same. The enforcement division accomplishes this by being highly visible and emphasizing public contacts in the field. These contacts not only allow wardens to check for compliance and inform and educate the public. There is a new trend in poaching, which strongly indicates a

trend towards commercialization in Montana's trophy wildlife. Many large-scale cases have recently been uncovered and several more of these cases are currently under investigation.

SUMMARY OF 2005 ENFORCEMENT EFFORTS

ENFORCEMENT EFFORTS		ADMINISTRATION & GAME DAMAGE EFFORTS	
Fisherman checks	5,995	Non-Enforcement calls handled	567
Hunter/trapper checks	6,563	License dealers & associated contacts	222
Boat checks	2,835	Meetings & admin reports	1192
Snowmobile checks	744	Administrative inspections	194
Park-site visitor checks	316	Game damage calls (863hours)	345
Landowner contacts	532		
Citations issued	947		
Warnings issued	147		
EDUCATION EFFORTS			
Public presentations; sportsman meetings	67	(237 hours)	
Hunter Education programs	23	(74 hours)	
Aquatic Education: 13 programs (67 hours); 517 attendees (mostly children and handicapped persons).			